

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Voting Absentee by Mail

If I request an absentee ballot by mail, will I be guaranteed to receive a ballot?

The registrar must verify that you are a qualified voter in order to send you a ballot. If your eligibility cannot be verified, then you will be notified in writing and you will not receive a ballot. Some reasons your request for an absentee ballot may be rejected are:

- Your request for an absentee ballot was received too late; the request deadline is four days before election day 4:30 p.m. deadline.
- If you registered by mail and have not previously voted in the parish where you registered, you must vote in person either during the early voting period or at the precinct on election day unless you meet special requirements noted below.
- You requested an absentee ballot from a parish or district/precinct where you are not registered to vote.
- You registered after the voter registration books were closed 30 days prior to election day.
- Your request for an absentee ballot was incomplete.

Special Requirements to vote by mail the first time when you registered to vote by mail: If you previously registered in the parish, are a military or overseas citizen, in the Special Program for Physically Handicapped Voters, a student at an institution for higher learning located outside of your parish of residence, or you appear in the registrar's office prior to the election to prove your identity, you may vote by mail the first time. Students are required to submit a copy of their fee bill or identification card with their application to vote absentee by mail.

If I receive an absentee ballot, how do I vote it and return it?

Along with the ballot, you will receive a sheet of instructions concerning how to vote and return your ballot. The ballot itself also contains instructions that must be followed to mark the ballot.

May I vote by fax?

If you feel that you will not have time to vote by mail, you may request that the Registrar of Voters send you a ballot by fax. The registrar of voters will send you a ballot if you have not already received one by mail, affidavit, and statement waiving your right to a secret ballot. You can then **mail** your voted ballot, affidavit, and waiver to the registrar -- **OR** -- you can **fax** them to the registrar after signing a waiver of the right to a secret ballot. There are special provisions for U.S. military or overseas citizens.

Will my absentee ballot be counted? How are absentee ballots counted?

- The Parish Board of Election Supervisors in each parish, along with absentee commissioners, are responsible for counting absentee ballots. The Parish Board of Election Supervisors consists of: the clerk of court, the registrar of voters, the chairman of the democratic parish executive committee, the chairman of the republican parish executive committee, and a governor's appointee.
- Absentee ballots are counted unless successfully challenged.
- They are counted in public no earlier than 1:00 p.m. and no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.
- If you choose to attend the absentee ballot counting, you may not leave the public facility or have any outside communications until the count is completed and the polls are closed at 8 pm.
- Absentee ballots may be challenged by a candidate or his representative, a member of the Parish Board of Election Supervisors, or a qualified elector, for the following grounds:
 - the applicant is not qualified to vote in the election.
 - the applicant is not qualified to vote in the precinct.

- the applicant is not the person whose name is shown on the precinct register.
- The challenge is required to be in writing and filed with the registrar on or before the fourth day before the election for which the ballot is challenged.
- Absentee ballots may also be challenged for cause on election day during the counting. A challenge for cause is a reason other than the grounds listed above. The Parish Board of Election Supervisors determines the validity of a challenge for cause by majority vote. Also, any ballot with a distinguishing mark or feature making the ballot susceptible of identification shall be rejected if a majority of the board determines that the mark was made by action of the voter.